to harm them. We resumed our journey at dawn of the following day, crossing successively woods and stretches of open country.

While crossing one of those woods I came upon one of the most touching scenes of savage life. Near one of those numerous brooks that wind their way everywhere, and that constitute the headwaters of the Cadereri, I met a young family. The head was no more than eighteen years old, and his companion was not over fifteen or sixteen, yet she already carried in her arms a child of a few months. They were accompanied by an old Indian woman. The faces and chests of the young couple had not yet been painted with the indelible dyes of the tribe; but the young woman, who had been bathing in the brook, had painted her face with urucu dye, which lent her a childlike attractiveness. This interesting couple, on seeing us pass, showed visible signs of surprise and alarm.

Tired as I was, and anxious to get to the end of the journey, it was not even possible for me to tarry a few minutes and have some friendly words with these poor savages; besides, the interpreter was not present at the time.

I would have liked, at least, to offer them a cloth with [80] which the two children -- mother and baby -- might ward off the burning rays of the sun during their journey across vast stretches of open country; but our men, rebellious like all Maué Indians, carried only what was strictly necessary for our own subsistence.

We have sketched here this touching scene in order to inspire sympathy for the poor savages, weighted down as they are with great misfortunes.

III

I arrive at the village of Necodemos. -- The Mundurucu offer me shelter and good hospitality.

After five days of incessant walking, counting from the spot where we had left our canoe at the headwaters of the Cadereri, we finally saw in the distance a column of smoke which rose from the maloca of Necodemos.

VII

Early notices of the Mundurucu -- Historical records

175 [131] The Mundurucu villages are located in the valley of the mighty Tapajoz, which was discovered only 130 years ago, in 1748, when the miner João de Sousa de Azevedo traveled down the river from Mato-Grosso to Pará, carrying sixty-four drams of gold extracted from one of its tributaries which he named the Rio das Três Barras. [91]

114 131 In his Corographia Brasilica of 1817, Ayres de Cazal divided the province of Para into four large districts, bounded naturally by the four great tributaries of the Amazon, the Tocantins, the Xingu, the Tapajoz, and the Madeira. For obvious reasons of Mundurucu preponderance in the area, he gave the name of Mundurucania to the district bounded in the east by the Tapajoz, in the west by the Madeira, in the north by the Amazon and in the south by the Juruena. In describing Mundurucania, this author says that with 101 the exception of a few stretches along the banks of the rivers which bound it, the district was completely dominated by various savage nations, the best known being the Juma, the Maué, the Pama, the Parintintin, the Mura, the Andirá, the Arara, and the Mundurucu after whom the country was named.

[302 386] "The Mundurucu," Ayres de Cazal goes on to say, "who have the custom of dyeing their bodies black with genipap, are numerous, tall, warlike, and feared by all the other nations, who give them the name of Pai-quicé, which means 'head-cutter,' owing [727] to their custom of chopping off the head of any foe who falls into their hands; and they know how to embalm it so as to preserve for many years the appearance it had on being cut.

[622] "They adorn their crude and wretched huts with these horrid trophies. The man who can exhibit ten of them is qualified to be elected chief of the band. They know the virtues of various plants, which they use in curing certain dangerous ailments.

[648] "Nearly all Mundurucu bands are today our allies, and some are already christianized.

[131] the plains] are not located in the district which Ayres de Cazal named Mundurucania. They stand in the territory which the geographer called Tapajonia, between the Tapajoz and the Xingu and close to the sources of the eastern tributaries of the Tapajoz, namely the Cadereri, Cabetutum and Cururu rivers, the Rio das Tropas (which the Mundurucu call Pitunzi) and the Rio do Crepuri.

In the course of my journey I encountered a great many small streams that were sources of the Cadereri and tributaries of the Tapajoz.

Had I proceeded in the same direction beyond Necodemos a few days longer, I would undoubtedly have come upon the sources of the tributaries of the Xingu.

IX

Wars of the Mundurucu -- waging procedure -- End of these wars.

727 We have already noted that the wars of these barbarians are 597 waged with the sole aim of capturing young women and children of both sexes. Within the tribe, however, the captives are treated no differently than native Mundurucu. They are painted with the same arabesques of indelible dyes; the woman immediately gets a husband, and the child finds an adoptive father who is almost invariably the same Indian who captured him. When preparations are made for one of these forays, the warrior's sister, his mother, or some other relative places an order for a child, saying: "Bring me a boy to be my son."

[648] The Mundurucu's chief victims are the Parintintin; in addition to a desire for captives, the deadly hatred [94] which has long ruled between the two tribes is another motive for frequent attacks.

721 Whenever it becomes known that a band of Parintintin have appeared somewhere, the Mundurucu immediately set off after them. To my knowledge, however, this inveterate hatred is not directed toward other tribes. Among the Mundurucu there runs a

000 a different origin. Since I have already given the essential material
114 about the Apiacas it might, however, be appropriate to repeat here what I reported about the Mundrucus (Reise in Brasilien III. 1308 et. seq., 1337.) for no other traveller has actually observed these remarkable Indians in their native habitat.

The Mundrucus, Mondurucus, Mundurucus, Moturicus
(called by the Apiacas Pari)

●131 The Mundrucus are, together with the Apiacas, the ruling tribe in the northern basin of the Tapajoz. Their largest aldea de S. Manoel, which has trade connections with the Brasilians, lies about a day's journey below the junction of the Rio Arinos with the Juruena at the Rio negro (vermelho).

142 [387] When I met the first Mundrucus in the Mission Novo Monte Carmel de Canoma I had to admit that I had never before seen Indians like these. Without exception they were athletically built, broad-chested and four-square, plump and well nourished in limbs and torso, and the hard muscles so evenly covered as though these people had never interrupted a life of comfortable relaxation with the hardships
[516] of war and the hunt. Their posture and their walk was that of conscious strength. What struck me the most, along with the general physical excellence of every member of the tribe, was the light skin color.
304 They were not so deep a copper red as many other Indians, in particular those living on plains or on large rivers, and this paler color was considerably accented by the tattooing (it was not just painting) which covered almost the whole of the body. * Either the whole face was

*See the illustration in Spix and Martius Reiseatlas. For this painful operation they use a comb made from the thorns of several varieties of palm trees. In all probability there is no other tribe in South America which practices tattooing to the same extent. Rob. Dudley has drawn similar ones from Guyana.

4: Horton E-4 (no date) 1948
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

THE MUNDURUCU[1]

By DONALD HORTON

TERRITORY AND NAME

101
[131]
[197]

The *Mundurucú* are a *Tupí*-speaking people in the southwestern portion of the State of Pará and the southeastern corner of the State of Amazonas, Brazil (map 1, *No. 1;* map 4; lat. 5°–8° S., long. 56°–60° W.). When first encountered by Europeans in the late 18th century, the *Mundurucú* were a warlike people, aggressively expanding their territory along the Tapajóz River and adjacent areas. Their expansion reached its limits at the beginning of the 19th century, when they were defeated by the Neo-Brazilians. Since then their territory has dwindled; remnant settlements are located on the Canumá and several of its tributaries (Abacaxis, Paracury, Apucitáua), in the municípios of Maus, Parintins, and Juriti, and on the Cururú River (a southeastern tributary of the Tapajóz). The principal settlements are located along the middle Tapajóz River and especially on its southeastern tributary, the Río de Tropas (between lat. 6° and 7° S., and long. 56° and 57° W.). Communities formerly established on the lower Tapajóz between the Rio de Tropas and the Amazon have been absorbed or wiped out by Neo-Brazilian settlers.

Kruse (1934) distinguishes four regional groups of the *Mundurucú*: The Tapajóz River group, living on both sides of the Tapajóz between the Rio de Tropas and the Cururú River; the Madeira River *Mundurucú*, on the Secudury, a tributary of the Canumá; the Xingú River *Mundurucú*, known also as the *Curuaya*, on the uppermost left tributary of the Igarapé de Flecha, itself an eastern tributary of the middle Rio Curá do Iriri; and the Juruena River *Mundurucú*, known also as the *Njadibiwaras*. Nimuendajú (personal communication) regards the name "*Madeira Mundurucú*" as unsuitable, since the rivers on which this group is located do not flow into the Madeira; he also believes that the *Curuaya*,

[1] The writer is indebted to Dr. Curt Nimuendajú, who through personal knowledge of the *Mundurucú* and familiarity with literary sources not available to the writer, was able to provide additional information on the distribution and history of the tribe which has been utilized in the present account.

[128] Where the literature clearly indicates that a custom is no longer practiced, the past tense is employed; otherwise the account is given in the present tense even though it is probable that much of the culture so described no longer persists.

2. ABORIGINAL CULTURE*

121 The brief outline of the aboriginal culture of the Munduruc\u00fa which follows is based chiefly on traditional knowledge and the memories of informants, supplemented by the writer's observation of those features which are extant. Only slight reference has been made to historical sources due to their relative unreliability and also because of the absence of data in them on the socio-economic organization, which is our major interest in this work. This section does not pretend to be an ethnography of the Munduruc\u00fa, but will be focussed on the delineation of the basis of Munduruc\u00fa socio-cultural integration. It will thus provide a baseline for the study of Munduruc\u00fa culture change.

The Economy

105 [131] The Munduruc\u00fa are essentially forest dwellers. Although their aboriginal villages are located on high savannahs at the headwaters of the eastern tributaries of the Tapaj\u00f3s River, they depended on the resources of the forests and rivers for their subsistence. Their economy did not differ greatly from that of other Tropical Forest

* Because Munduruc\u00fa culture has suffered considerable attrition and because this culture loss has been felt in varying degrees in different areas of modern occupation, it is expedient to use the past tense throughout this chapter. It should be remembered that many traits still exist, especially those outside the realm of warfare and ceremonial. The later chapter on the contemporary Munduruc\u00fa will indicate what is now present or absent.

[pp 1-16 not processed]

6: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1956
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

Matrilocality and Patrilineality in Mundurucú Society

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121 114 UNILINEAL descent and unilocal residence, by definition, follow one of but two possible lines, the male or the female. Simple arithmetic would therefore dictate that there are four possible combinations of common descent and residence. Only three of the combinations, however, are found to have any frequent and reliable occurrence. Kroeber (1952:213) noted the single lapse in the following observation:

> "Logically the possibility arises of a fourth plan of society: matrilocal but patrilineal . . . I do not know of such a society, and should expect its occurrence to be rare."

This combination is certainly unusual, and ethnographic literature yields practically no descriptions of its unequivocal occurrence. In most cases, the unilocality or unilineality of the group is questionable. For example, Loeb and Broek (1947:418) claim the Karen people of Burma to have patrilineal clans and matrilocal residence. However, the sources which they cite in support of this contention (Marshall 1922; Heine-Geldern 1923) do not warrant such positive affirmations as to the rule of descent. This conclusion with regard to the Karen is verified by Murdock (1954). Residence rules are likewise subject to misinterpretation, for in many cultures matrilocality is frequently a temporary state followed by permanent patrilocality.

391 613 [31] In 1952 the writer discovered the co-existence of matrilocality and patrilineality among the Mundurucú Indians of the upper Tapajós River in central Brazil.[1] Existing information on the Mundurucú had led me to believe, before field research, that the group was patrilocal. Subsequent field investigation proved the contrary to be true, and gives us one of our few authenticated accounts of a patrilineal group in which postmarital residence is permanently matrilocal.

121 The purpose of this paper is to present the pertinent data for the use of students of social organization, to describe how such a system functions, and to discuss its significance in terms of the evolution of social structure. Consideration of the latter problem will be reserved until the conclusions of this paper, for much of the discussion will hinge upon what seems incongruous, nonfunctional, or dysfunctional in Mundurucú society. This material, when analyzed [178] with reference to the limited amount of historical data available, suggests strongly that the Mundurucú shifted from patrilocality to matrilocality in the first half of the nineteenth century. The bearing of such a change upon Murdock's observations (1949:190) on the difficulty of a transition from patrilineal to matrilineal descent becomes immediately apparent when it is considered that much of Murdock's position depends upon his persuasive argument that a patrilineal society can change from patrilocality to matrilocality only with great difficulty. It would seem that this shift in residence patterns is possible under certain conditions which will be analyzed functionally among the Mundurucú. Matrilocality, following Murdock's use of residence as a determinant

6: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1956
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

of descent, is one of the preconditions to the development of matrilineality.[2] That the latter change never occurred among the Mundurucú can be partially explained by the fact their subsequent involvement in the commercial exploitation of wild rubber has resulted in bilocality and neolocality (Murphy 1954).

It is because of this later breakdown of unilocality that my description of Mundurucú social organization will refer to mid-nineteenth century Mundurucú society. Much of the social structure described below is still observable in certain conservative Mundurucú villages and served to supplement and corroborate information obtained from old informants.

THE MUNDURUCÚ

Since Mundurucú culture is not well documented, even for a South American group, a few prefatory remarks are in order. Linguistically, the Mundurucú have been classified as "remotely" Tupian by Nimuendajú (1938:975). However, a summary comparison of Mundurucú and Tupí indicates that if a genetic relationship does exist, it could only be very obscure and distant. It is possible that the substantial number of Tupian loan words in the Mundurucú lexicon had led Nimuendajú to an erroneous conclusion. The final resolution of this problem will be of importance to the prehistory of the Mundurucú and of the entire central Amazon basin.

The Mundurucú first came to the attention of the chroniclers in the late eighteenth century when they launched a series of strong raids against other Indian tribes and white colonists in the lower Amazon Valley. Their late appearance on the historical scene and subsequent northward thrust into the waters of the lower Madeira River suggest that the Mundurucú originated in the highlands of Mato Grosso and thence migrated northwards. However, their only known homeland is in the region of mixed gallery forest and savannah east of the upper Tapajós River, between 6° and 8° south latitude. This is where the remnants of the tribe are located today.

After their pacification by Portuguese colonial forces at the end of the eighteenth century, the Mundurucú entered into a long period of peaceful symbiosis with the whites (Almeida Serra 1869:4-5). Traders and government officials capitalized on the renowned aggressiveness of the Mundurucú by employing them as mercenary warriors against tribes still hostile to the whites. In 1835, their services were sought in the suppression of the Revolution of the Cabanos (Harrt 1885:132), and at the end of the nineteenth century their war parties were still being enlisted by the rubber traders of the Madeira River (Coudreau 1897:50). Fighting was not the only source of trade goods for the Mundurucú. Since earliest times, the white settlers of the Amazon valley have exploited the natural products of the region to the neglect of agriculture. The resultant shortage of local sources of subsistence forced them to rely in part upon the products of the Indian gardens. Thus, the Mundurucú were deeply involved in the sale of surplus manioc flour as early as 1819 (Martius 1867: 395). Manioc flour continued to be their principal trade commodity until the late nineteenth century, when wild rubber assumed primacy (Tocantins 1877).

The middle of the nineteenth century found the Mundurucú of the upper

7: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1957 SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

THE MUNDURUCÚ

The Munduruci, a Tupian speaking people, are presently located in a region of mixed forest and savannah east of the Tapajós River in the state of Pará, Brazil, between the sixth and eighth degrees of south latitude. Highly acculturated and almost assimilated remnants of the tribe are also found on the Secundurí, Abacaxí and Maués Rivers in the adjoining state of Amazonas. The Munduruci were first reported upon in the latter region in 1768 (Monteiro Noronha, 1862). Their military strength was rapidly impressed upon the colonists of the Amazon Valley, for they commenced a series of strong attacks upon forts along the Amazon River that continued until the colonial government retaliated and in 1795 struck at the Munduruci homeland on the upper Tapajós River. There is no information on the impact of this attack on the Munduruci, but they ceased raiding white settlements immediately thereafter and in time became active allies of the colonists and the Portuguese colonial government. So rapidly did the Munduruci adapt to the whites that by 1817 Ayres de Casal (1817:237) wrote, "Nearly all of the Munduruci hordes are today our allies, and some already are Christians." But the Munduruci had by no means become pacific, and raids, often instigated by the whites, were pushed with unabated fury against other Indian tribes.

Shortly after their contact with the white colonists, segments of the Munduruci were evidently in the process of migrating northward along the Tapajós River and into the country between the Tapajós and Madeira Rivers. The Munduruci who settled in these more northerly regions soon became assimilated into the neo-Brazilian population. Missions and mission-sponsored reductions were established in their midst at several locales, and their inhabitants intermarried with the Portuguese and mestizo colonists. The population of these Indian reductions declined throughout the century; Coudreau (1897:9) states that the old Munduruci reduction of Ucituba had 483 Indians in 1833, 343 in 1848, 100 in 1869 and only 50 in 1895. Others, such as Boim and Itaituba, lost their Indian character and became Brazilian towns. By 1883 the process had advanced so far that Charles F. Hartt (1885:117) noted: "The Munduruci of the Tapajós, below the rapids, are now all civilized and so mixed with the general population that their nationality has in large part been lost."

The balance of the tribe, which remained south, or upstream, of the head of navigation of the Tapajós River, maintained relative autonomy. They conducted trade, at first in manioc flour and later in raw latex, with Brazilian traders who seasonally ascended the river, but no permanent Brazilian settlements were located above the Cachoeira de Maranhão, a series of impassable rapids. At the end of the century, however, the boom in rubber extraction attracted permanent trading posts to the upper Tapajós River, and a Catholic mission was established on the banks of the river.

The rubber boom terminated the isolation of the Munduruci of the upper Tapajós. The population became involved in rubber production for barter, and, although the new economic pursuit did not seriously hamper their tradi-

8: Murphy & Steward E-5 (1952-1953) 1956
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13
Montagnais NH6

problem of acculturation toward individual families has not been adequately described for South America.

The Munduruc have been in active contact with European civilization for the last 160 years, of which only 80 years have been spent in rubber exploitation. The following description of the pre-rubber period Munduruc does not purport to depict the pre-contact, or aboriginal, Munduruc, but refers to the middle of the nineteenth century. Earlier changes in Munduruc culture form the subject of another paper [Murphy 1955].

The Munduruc have inhabited the gallery forests and savannah lands east of the upper Tapajos River in the state of Para, Brazil, for at least two centuries. The savannah in this region is quite limited, and the predominant flora are the high forest and thick vegetation typical of the Amazon basin. The Munduruc chose the open country for their villages because remoteness from the larger streams afforded some protection from river-born enemy attack and relief from the swarms of insects which infest the river banks, while the absence of forests immediately adjoining the villages gave some security against the dawn surprise attacks favored by nearly all tribes of the region. These attacks were difficult to launch without cover. Since the Munduruc used water transportation only slightly, isolation from the rivers was not a hardship.

It has been noted that the nineteenth century Munduruc and Northeastern Algonkians were on the same level of sociocultural integration. The simple, loosely-structured nomadic hunting bands of the Algonkians were roughly equivalent to the semi-sedentary villages of the Munduruc. In both instances, the local group consisted of a multi-family, autonomous community. Under certain circumstances, the various Munduruc villages tended to integrate on a tribal level, but there were no permanent trans-village political controls. That no Munduruc village could function in isolation, since there was inter-village marriage and periodic cooperation in warfare and ceremonialism, does not necessarily imply a higher level of integration in economic or political activities. Similarly, it can be argued that Northeastern Algonkian bands were autonomous but by no means isolated from other such units.

The Munduruc and Algonkians were integrated on the same level, but their cultures differed structurally or typologically and in content. Patrilineal clans and moieties in Munduruc society made kinship ties more extensive and pervasive. Village subsistence was based on slash-and-burn horticulture. Although the heavy work of clearing the forest was done by work groups consisting of all the village males, garden care and manioc processing were carried out by the women of the matrilocal extended family. The chief occupations of the men were hunting and warfare.

Leacock's reconstruction of the aboriginal society of the Eastern Montagnais shows the nuclear family to have had greater functional importance than among the Munduruc. The Montagnais family was a relatively stable unit within the shifting and amorphous hunting bands, whereas the Munduruc pattern was the converse. Each Munduruc household was a stable unit composed of women and their female offspring. The Munduruc had the seeming paradox of matrilocal extended families in a society of patrilineal clans and moieties. The men married into these extended families from similar units in the same village or from other villages. However, there was no need to integrate a husband into the extended matrilocal family of the household, because the focus of his activities was the men's house. All males upon reaching adolescence slept in the men's house, which was located on the western perimeter of the circle of houses composing the village. The females of each household prepared and sent food to the men's house to be eaten in a communal meal. The men's house was also the center of male work and relaxation. The most immediate economic tie of a man to his wife's house was that he brought his daily take of game there. Communal distribution of game, however, made this economically

577 different in kind, for the central theme
186 makes a sharp and conscious dichotomy between desirable behavior within Mundurucú society and toward the outside world. These opposite aspects of their dual ethic did not conflict but served to reinforce each other and are essential parts of an internally self-consistent view of humanity.

648 The Mundurucú first came to the
[13] attention of colonial Brazil as a tribe of dauntless warriors inhabiting the forests and savannah country east of the upper Tapajós River in the state of Pará. Their reputation for unmitigated ferocity and hostility towards other Indian groups and white settlers grew until 1795, when Brazil authorities established peace with them and diverted their energies into attacks on tribes still unpacified. They achieved considerable success in their service as mercenaries, and by the end of the nineteenth century, there were no hostile Indians within hundreds of miles
[724] of Mundurucú territory. Mundurucú warfare ended with the general pacification of the region in the beginning of
[105] this century, and they now pursue a peaceful existence, hunting, tilling their gardens, and collecting crude rubber for sale to white traders.

131 Mundurucú warfare represents one
577 side of a dually oriented system of ethical values. If one is to view them from this perspective, they appear, to use the descriptive terminology followed by Ruth Benedict, to be true Dionysians.[2] But the internal social order stressed harmony, cooperation, and

[2] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (New York, 1946). [p. 370(2)]

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1954
SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

I. HABITAT AND HISTORY

The Munduruci Indians are a tribal group of some 1,200 people living on the Tapajós River in the state of Pará, Brazil. The remnants of a formerly much more numerous population, they have maintained a considerable part of their native culture despite more than one and a half centuries of contact with Brazilian society. Linguistically, the Munduruci are Tupian-speaking, but their language is not mutually intelligible with the so-called classical Tupian of the Brazilian littoral. Rather, they appear to form a Tupian substock in company with the near-by Shipaya, Curuaya, and Juruna Indians of the Xingú River drainage. Other cultural characteristics indicate some discontinuity between the Munduruci and the bulk of the Tupian-speaking peoples and suggest that Munduruci history had a relatively independent course from that of the coastal groups. Some of these differences are manifest in mythology and religion.

Habitat

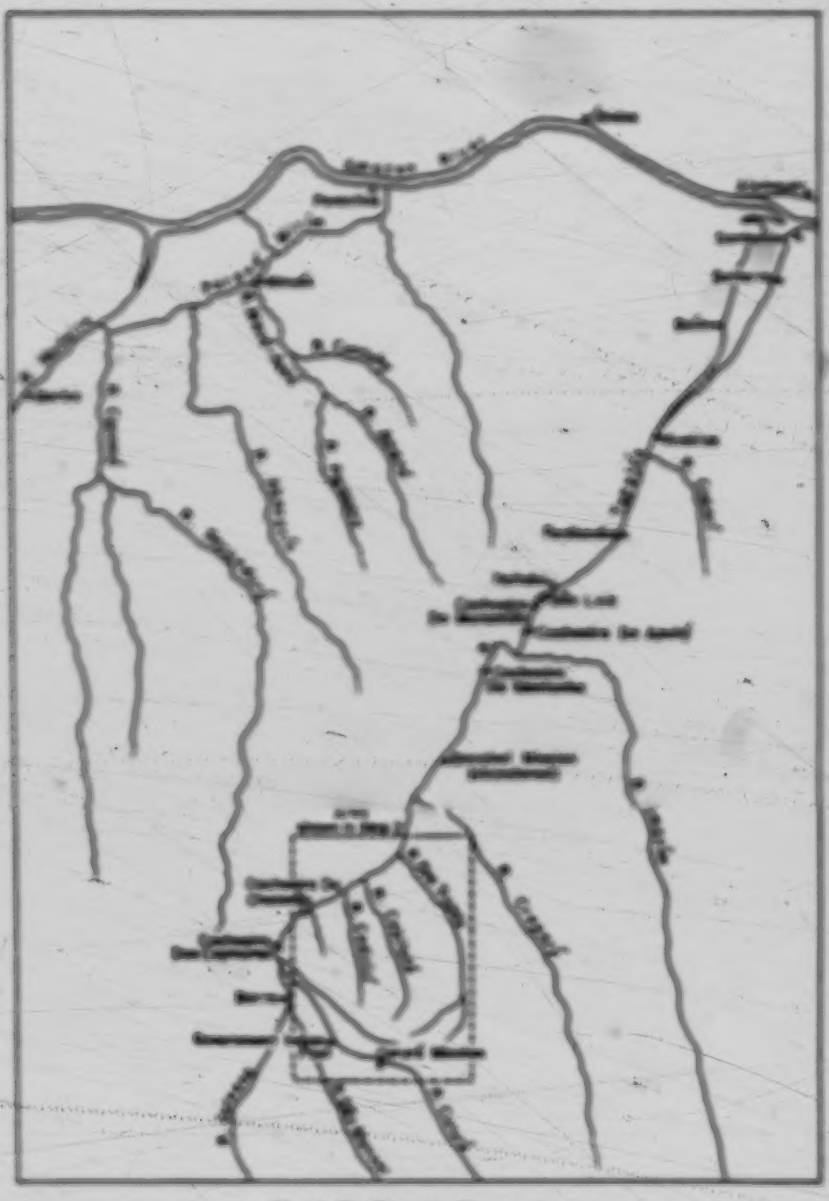
The Munduruci habitat is rather different from what might commonly be expected in the Amazon Valley. Although stretches of flat jungle terrain abound, the area is in a northward-reaching finger of the Planalto do Mato Grosso; the topography is characterized by low hills, and the forests are interspersed with rock outcroppings and large stretches of grassy savannah. Actually, the northernmost extension of these central Brazilian highlands overlooks the Amazon behind the city of Santarém at the mouth of the Tapajós River.

The traveler en route to the Munduruci country usually ascends the Tapajós River from Santarém; recent completion of an emergency landing field some 300 miles upstream can shorten the weeks-long trip to a matter of two hours' flight.[1] During the first 150 miles of the water route the steamer or launch carries one up the deep blue and usually tranquil stream between shores that are at first more than 10 miles apart, but which narrow to a width of about one mile. The hills on either side rise to a few hundred feet and are covered with the vegetation characteristic of most areas of terra firme in the Amazon. At the point where the more elevated country and the banks of the river finally merge to form a narrow gap, the Tapajós River plunges furiously over the almost impassible rapids called the Cachoeira de Maranhão. These rapids form an effective block to navigation, and the traveler must debark and by-pass them by truck or on foot. The truck and the road, which are frequently not usable, are the property of a rubber-trading concern that maintains warehouse and commercial facilities at the lower end of the rapids. The company town has a population of less than 1,000, but it is the metropolis and entrepôt of the upper Tapajós; one can continue for 1,000 miles farther upstream without finding a settlement one fifth that size.

The next stage of the trip is made in a shallow-draft diesel launch, especially built to negotiate rapids. The shores of the lower Tapajós River are lined with pleasant sand beaches and are broken by occasional villages, but the upper reach

[1] The reader will find it convenient to consult the maps on pp. 2 and 3 during the following discussion.

11: Murphy Σ-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Monbaruco SQ13



Map 1. The Tapajós River region.

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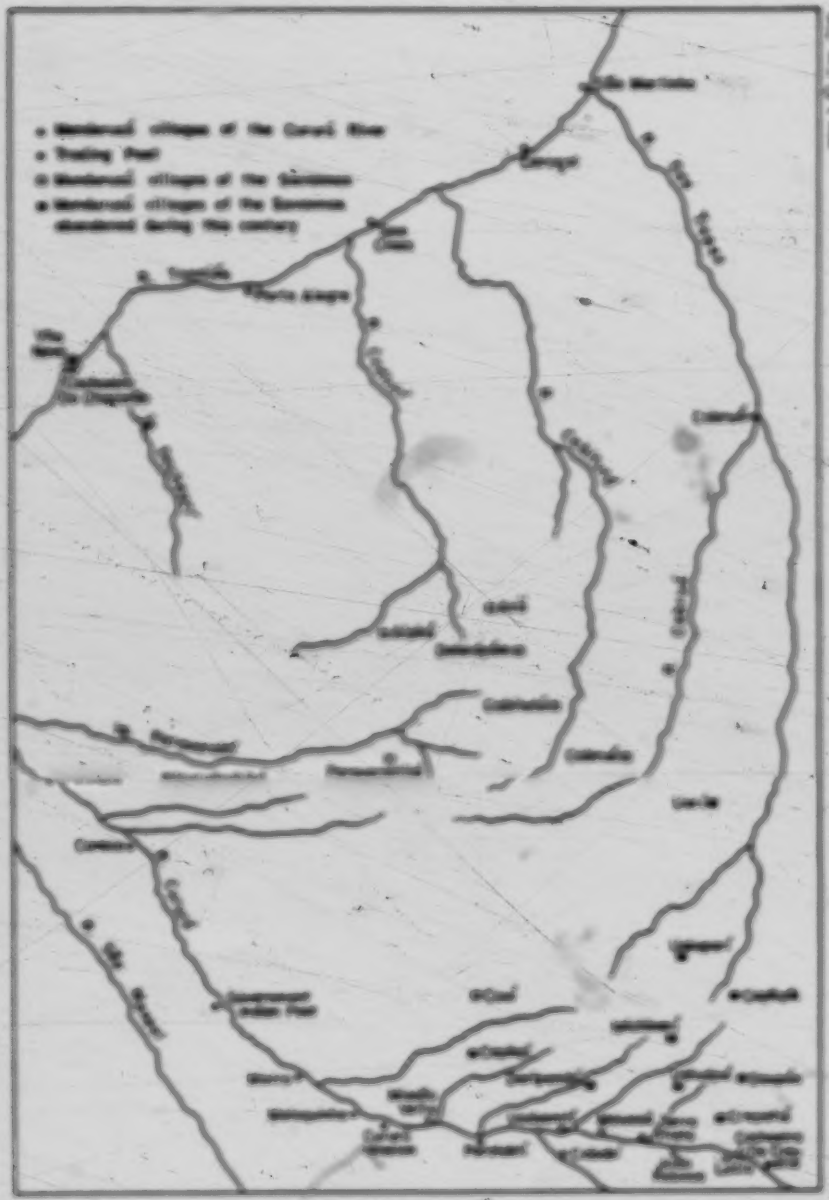


Map 1. Munduruca territory and villages

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

of the stream is wild and solitary. The jungle overhangs the water and only once in a great while does a tiny wattle-and-daub house, the home of a collector of wild rubber, appear in a small clearing. At even greater intervals, the launch passes or stops at little hamlets of three to six such houses, which form the trading centers of the scattered collector population.

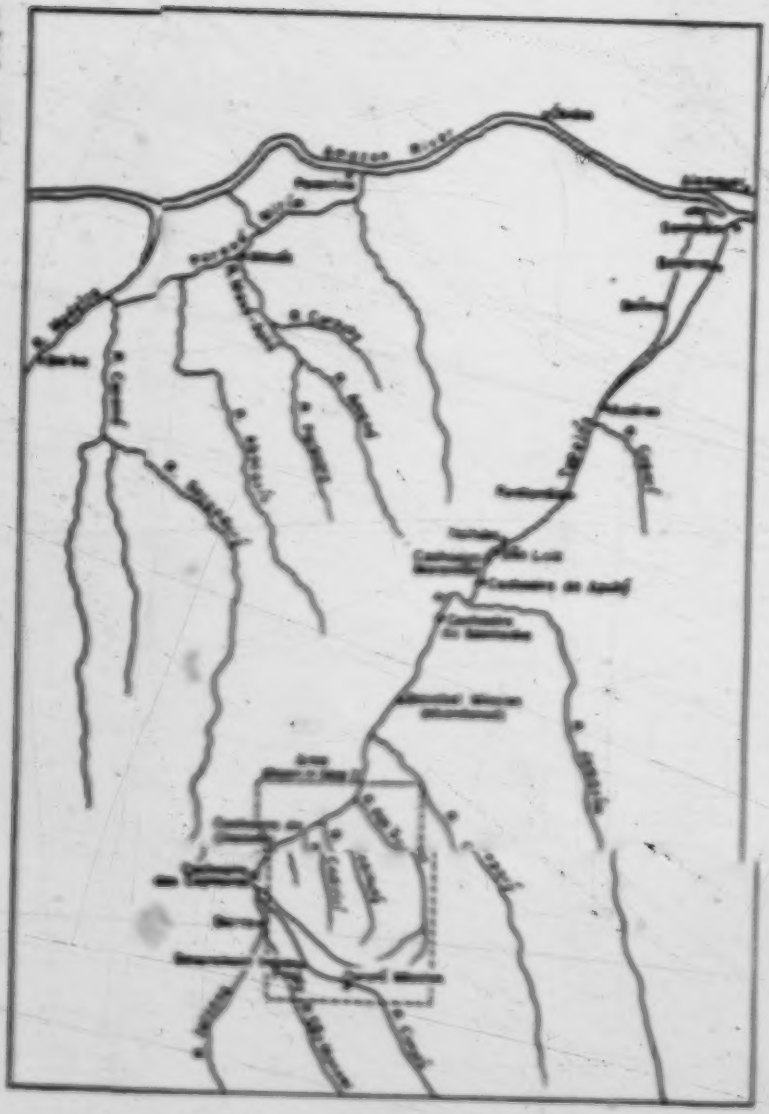
Several days and barely 400 miles of this travel bring the voyager to the trading posts which conduct sporadic business with one segment of the Munduruc population. There are a few such establishments, all situated on the Tapajós River near the mouths of its eastern tributaries, the Cadiriri, Cabituni, and das Tropas. A number of Munduruc villages are at the headwaters of the latter streams, and an occasional Indian, distinguished by tattooing, unusually ragged or ill-fitting clothing, and impassivity of facial expression can often be seen at the trading posts. Racially, the Munduruc does not stand out sharply, for Caucasoid genes are as thoroughly distributed among the Indian population as are Indian genes among the local Brazilians.

If one wishes to reach the village of Cabruá, a typical Munduruc community of the savannah lands east of the Tapajós, it is necessary to ascend the Cabituni River in a canoe. After five days, or more during the rainy season, of dawn-to-dusk paddling, the port of the village is reached. This consists of a cleared stretch of river bank and a trail that leads to a house about 100 yards away. The house is usually occupied only during the dry season, when some residents of Cabruá go there to pass the summer in fishing and rubber collecting. To reach the village, one must walk a half-day overland from this point. A well-beaten trail leads from the valley of the Cabituni and over a ridge, dipping down again to cross a small stream. It continues through the forest and then abruptly emerges onto a sun-scorched savannah. The journey is then near an end, and a few miles of slow but steady ascent through the grasslands and past isolated clumps of forest bring one to the village.

The majority of the Munduruc now live on the banks of the larger streams of the area in order to have convenient access to the rubber trees that grow there. Only 300 Indians live in the contemporary savannah villages, but 700 reside on the Cururú River in contact with a Brazilian Indian Service post and a Roman Catholic mission staffed by Franciscan priests. Another 200, the most acculturated part of the population, live among the Brazilian population of the Tapajós River. But the region of mixed savannah and gallery forest east of the Tapajós River is their traditional habitat. Most of the events recounted in their mythology are believed to have occurred there, and this has been their homeland throughout the historic period and, according to Munduruc tradition, since the creation of man.

The modern savannah communities have preserved traditional Munduruc architecture and village plan to a greater extent than the riverine groups. Each has two to five dwelling houses and a men's house, arranged in a circle about a central plaza. But whereas the plazas formerly served as ceremonial and dance precincts and were kept free of weeds, they are now rank with undergrowth. And the houses are considerably smaller, reflecting the diminished population of the

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13



Map 1. Region of the Tapajós and lower Madeira rivers

[p 6]

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

THE SETTING

The Mundurucú Indians live in the State of Pará, Brazil, in a region east of the Tapajós River between 6° and 7½° S lat. Other members of the tribe, now largely assimilated into the rural Brazilian population of the Amazon Valley, live north and west of this region on the lower reaches of the Tapajós River and on the Maué-Assú, Secundurý, and Abacaxis rivers; the latter three are tributaries of a channel of the Madeira River.

The Mundurucú are usually classified as a Tupian-speaking group, although the linguistic relationship has been described by Curt Nimuendajú as remote.[1] Within this general Tupian language family, however, the Mundurucú language has its closest genetic links with the speech of the Curuaya Indians of the Xingú River. The affinity between Curuaya and Mundurucú was sufficiently close for Rev. Albert Kruse, an anthropologically minded missionary, to classify the former as a regional subgroup of the latter.[2] This classification, and also Kruse's identification of the Nambikuara as the "Juruena Mundurucú" are erroneous.[3] The Mundurucú originally were an autonomous tribe that had little or no political relations with other native groups. Their territory at the time of their first recorded contact with the whites in the latter part of the eighteenth century was in the described region east of the Tapajós; their occupation of the waters of the lower Madeira and Tapajós rivers was the result of a migration that occurred after their contact.

The present-day Mundurucú population consists of about 1,250 people, a considerable decline from past times. Although the population figures of early explorers and chroniclers are generally too high, we may get some idea

[1] Nimuendajú, 1938, p. 975.
[2] Kruse, 1934, p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

THE SETTING

174 try of the Tapajós River. To the north, the terrain is covered by dense rain forest, but south of the Mundurucú country are great stretches of savannah that continue into the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Their distinct preference for unforested village locales could only have been acquired in their present home or further south. The previously mentioned cultural characteristics suggest the latter, although I can at present offer no further corroboration of this possibility.

●191 Although the Mundurucú regard their traditional homeland as the area of mixed gallery forest and savannah between the Cururú and Tropas rivers, only about 360 of the 1,250 surviving Indians live there. Another 700 live along the banks of the Cururú itself, and approximately 200 on the Tapajós River and tributary streams. The person in
177 search of the exotic would be sorely disappointed at his
[294] first contact with the Mundurucú. They dress in Western
[301] style garments, albeit ill-fitting and ragged, and they adorn themselves with glass beads, brilliantine, plastic combs, and religious medallions. The five-gallon gasoline can is
[315] a far more important artifact than the clay pot, and they cook in aluminum pans. Since the Indian strain is so strong
142 in the genetic make-up of the north Brazilian, the Mundurucú do not stand out sharply from their neighbors in physical characteristics. This is especially true of the
[304] younger Mundurucú who are no longer tattooed from head to foot as their parents were.

The way of life of the Mundurucú residents of the
171 Tapajós shore is especially close to that of their Brazilian neighbors. That the fundamental methods of farming and fishing are similar among both populations is not surprising, as north Brazilian subsistence techniques are largely
361 Indian-derived. But beyond that, the Tapajós-River Mundurucú live in single-house isolation and not in villages

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

133 rivers rise there as small streams meandering through gallery forest. As they flow south, they increase greatly in volume, and their valleys cut deeper into the uplands, tumbling over waterfalls and dropping through strong rapids on their descent to sea level. The forest on either shore becomes vast and deep, but in the interior, the Planalto scenery continues, for the high country extends in long fingers between the rivers and reaches north in some places to the very shores of the Amazon. This is uninhabited, and largely unknown, terrain; its rivers are small, and delightfully cool and swift, and the landscape is characterized by open savannahs, flat hills, and fantastic rock formations.

The Tapajós River proper begins at approximately 7½° S lat. and is formed by the confluence of the Juruena and São Manoel rivers. For about 300 miles below this point, it flows through a valley that is in places broad and flat—typical Amazonian scenery—but is more commonly hilly. There are numerous rapids in this stretch, but none so spectacular and dangerous, as the Cachoeira (Rapids) de Maranhão, at which point the river passes through a low range of hills and drops to about the same level as the Amazon. The Tapajós then continues, without further rapids north of this point another 150 miles to its confluence with the Amazon at Santarém. This section of the river is by far the most beautiful. It gradually broadens to form a bay ten miles wide, bordered on either side by forested hills. Unlike most other rivers of the area, the Tapajós is blue and clear, and its lower reaches are lined in the low-water dry season by endless stretches of white sand beach.

• 131 The Mundurucú live in the area immediately north and east of the point where the Tapajós is created by the juncture of the São Manoel and Juruena rivers. For this reason, I will refer to their habitat as being on the "upper Tapajós,"

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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while the lands lying north of the last rapids, the Cachoeira de Maranhão, will be termed the "lower Tapajós"; this division follows local usage. The traditional location of their villages has been in a high and hilly area inland from the Tapajós, between the Cururú and Tropas rivers. This is a region of mixed savannah and forest in which several minor tributaries of the Tapajós have their headwaters. Topographically, this high savannah land is a continuation of the Serra do Cachimbo; it extends northwestward through the Mundurucú country and across the Tapajós at the Cachoeiras de Capoeira and Chacorão. Beyond this point there is some savannah land at the headwaters of the Secundurý and Abacaxís rivers, but the terrain soon flattens out into the great, forested Amazon lowland encompassed by the Negro and Madeira rivers.

The savannahs in which the Mundurucú have long dwelled are considered agreeable by Indians and Brazilians alike, although the latter do not live in the area. The villages are usually situated on high, grassy knolls, and some offer vistas of twenty miles across forests and open country, low hills, and valleys. The local streams are small, but the water is cool and pure. And the forests are far richer in game than in the more heavily settled areas of the Amazon.

The climate of the upper Tapajós follows a more pronounced wet-and-dry cycle than that of the Amazon valley proper. The rains begin in mid-September and increase in frequency and intensity for the next three months. The heaviest rains fall between January and March; then they gradually slacken until the dry season commences in June. The great extremes between wet and dry seasons can be seen from the following figures on average January and July rainfall, collected by the Cururú Mission. During 1945–1951, the average January rainfall was 420.6 milli-

[Text continues on page 15]

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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Map 2. Present territory of the Mundurucú Indians

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12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

omy of the region. Trade and the patron have thus been the principal instruments in effecting social and cultural change in this part of South America.

THE EARLY CONTACT PERIOD

The Mundurucú were unknown in north Brazil, reported Martius, until 1770, when they began to launch strong attacks on the Portuguese settlements along the shores of the Amazon.[1] It was at this time, also, that they undertook an epic attack into the State of Maranhão, some 500 miles distant. A successful expedition was launched against them in 1795 in the upper Tapajós River region by the governor of Pará, after which they began to drift into the proximity of civilized settlements.[2]

The extent of Mundurucú territory in the eighteenth century is somewhat uncertain. Despite the possibility of a more southerly origin, the Indians themselves maintain that their home has always been in the savannahs to the east of the Tapajós, their scene of mythology is there, and that is where the expedition of 1795 found them. Their late appearance in Amazon history suggests that the Mundurucú occupation of sections of the lower Tapajós River and the country between the Tapajós and lower Madeira River did not much predate 1800 and was the result of the contact. Jesuit missionaries were active on the lower Tapajós River and west to the Madeira during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but the Mundurucú are not among the tribes of that sector mentioned by João Bettendorf, the Jesuit chronicler.[3] A Brazilian traveler, Ricardo de Almeida Serra gives further support to this contention in his report on tribes living on or near the

[1] Martius, 1867, p. 394.
[2] Almeida Serra, 1869, pp. 4-5.
[3] Bettendorf, 1910.

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

THE CONTACT PERIOD

131 175 Tapajós in 1779, which located the "Mondruci nation" on the "Rio Vermelha," probably either the Cadiriri or Cururú River.[4] Also, although Martius was personally acquainted only with the Mundurucú living between the Tapajós and Madeira, he confirmed the upper Tapajós to be their area of greatest strength in 1819.[5]

175 648 [166] The Mundurucú of the upper Tapajós River remained relatively isolated during the early contact period, although large numbers of migrants from these villages moved north to the proximity of the white settlements. This population shift, caused by the lure of manufactured articles, was facilitated by the rapid decimation of the intervening Indian tribes. The complementary, and frequently identical, agencies of colonization and catechization had broken and absorbed those groups, such as the populous Tapajó, which had occupied areas near the Amazon, and disease had reduced the ranks of the surviving [165] societies. Mundurucú warfare aided the process. For example, Serra located the Hiauain tribe in an area several days' travel above the first rapids of the Tapajós in 1779,[6] but in 1817 Manoel Ayres de Casal placed them on the east bank of the lower Tapajós, to where they had fled from Mundurucú war parties.[7] The net effect of these demographic changes was to provide the Mundurucú with uninterrupted avenues of access to trade facilities.

175 648 797 The Mundurucú who moved into the lower Tapajós valley soon entered into close relations with the whites. The mission of Santa Cruz was established in 1803 and was followed by other missions to the Mundurucú at Boim and Pinhel, all on the lower Tapajós.[8] The inhabitants of these

[4] Almeida Serra, 1869, pp. 3-5.
[5] Martius, 1867, p. 394.
[6] Almeida Serra, 1869, p. 3.
[7] Ayres de Casal, 1845, p. 232.
[8] Martius, 1867, p. 395.

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

sion and were also scattered throughout the surrounding forest. They were already conducting trade with the whites in manioc flour, sarsaparilla, and *guaraná* and apparently did not have the men's house and the other accoutrements of the traditional men's organization. According to these explorers, the Indians were found mainly on the Canomá and its tributary, the Secundurý. About forty years later, Mundurucú inhabitants lived also on the Abacaxís and Maué-Assú rivers, two other tributaries of the Paraná-Mirim, a channel that connects the Amazon with the lower Madeira.

The Mundurucú of that area are of interest, because the earliest assimilation of large numbers of the tribe took place in the Madeira River region. It was there too that a long tradition of friendly relations with the whites was established; this friendship was to a large extent sealed by the coöperation of the Mundurucú in the quelling of tribes of the region still hostile to the colonists. In the late eighteenth century, two tribes of the lower Madeira, the Mura and the Arara, especially the former, waged incessant warfare against the white settlements and did much to impede the colonization of the central Amazon Valley. Unable to cope with the Mura, the whites enlisted the aid of the Mundurucú and from this date, according to Charles F. Hartt, the whites and the Mundurucú were allies.[13] By 1819, Ayres de Casal reported the lower Madeira River town of Borba to have a nearby settlement of Mura who had sought refuge from the Mundurucú,[14] and in 1852, Henry Walter Bates, the noted English naturalist, found fugitive remnants of the tribe scattered along the Amazon as far as the town of Catuá, a short distance below the mouth of the Rio Teffé.[15] At the time Bates wrote, the at-

[13] Hartt, 1885, pp. 116–117.
[14] Ayres de Casal, 1845, p. 238.
[15] Bates, 1863, p. 188.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

Second, warfare, for both mercenary pay and trophy heads, persisted on a somewhat reduced scale and was especially successful, as Hartt notes, because of the acquisition of firearms.[34] The continuance of warfare helped to maintain the cohesion of the tribe and village as social units for the reasons already discussed, and also because it bolstered the positions of the chiefs by activating their roles as war leaders.

The Mundurucú who remained in their traditional villages in the savannahs east of the upper Tapajós were not as completely absorbed into the invading Brazilian society as the people who migrated to the river banks to tap rubber. But they, too, sought trade goods, and these, increasingly, were available only through rubber production. The most troublesome tribes of the region were largely pacified, and the demand for Mundurucú military service had consequently declined. Also, the Indians were more valuable to the traders in collecting rubber, which by the end of the century was netting the traders fabulous monetary returns. The recruitment of Indians into rubber collecting did not cause the immediate disintegration of their village life. Rubber was collected by them only from June to September, during which period they left their savannah villages to live in temporary shelters at their rubber avenues. This seasonal fractionation of the society had a precedent in the traditional practice of scattering along the streams to hunt and fish during the dry season. As in times past, when rubber collection was finished, the dispersed population reunited in their villages, where the native round of activities persisted throughout the remaining nine months of the year.

The Mundurucú territory also shrunk, for traditional-type villages no longer existed on the waters of the Crepory River in 1895 when Coudreau ascended the Ta-

[34] Hartt, 1885, p. 131.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ1

pajós,[37] although Chandless had stated that they inhabited the headwaters of that river in 1860.[38] Thus, by 1925 at the latest, the territory of the savannah Munduruçú had diminished to its present confines between the Curuá and Tropas rivers, and the number of communities was no doubt correspondingly smaller. The rest of the rejon in which Munduruçú were scattered in rubber production was occupied jointly with the Brazilians. Those remaining on the savannahs had already been exposed to civilization. They had acquired steel tools and clothes from the whites, and their warfare was more restricted; they had suffered losses in their material culture, and they had been exposed to Christianity. But the bulk of Munduruçú culture persisted.

By 1912–1914, depopulation, the demands of the rubber economy, scarcity of nearby hostile Indian tribes, and mission influence had combined to end warfare. This was a severe blow to the native culture, for one of its central foci had now disappeared; the primary interest of the Munduruçú male had been valor, trophy-head and captive taking, and the great ceremonies centering on the heads. It is a loss still felt today by the older Munduruçú men, who now look skeptically at the future and nostalgically at the past.

It was in this period, also, that the rubber boom collapsed, with the ultimate effect of giving a short extension to the life of the native society. Rubber collection decreased in importance and yielded decidedly less returns. The produce and labor of the Indians were no longer so eagerly sought, and there was a decrease in numbers of Brazilian rubber tappers and traders in the area. But the Munduruçú had already become completely dependent

[37] Coudreau, 1897, p. 30.
[38] Chandless, 1869, p. 277.

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Munduruku SQ13

3

economic life

Until about 1925, the bulk of the Munduruká popula- 131
tion of the Tapajós area lived in the region of inland sa-
vannah and gallery forest that begins some twenty to
thirty miles east of the upper Tapajós River. The popula- 162
tion of about 360 living in seven villages in this area today 361
is constantly diminishing. The villages and their approxi-
mate populations are: Aró, 90; Cabitutá, 45; Cabruá, 67;
Aipiká, 50; Dekodyem, 50; Caxí, 25; and Paxiuatikábá,
30. The last-named village is in the traditional savannah
area and has some antiquity, but in recent years the or-
ganization of village life has shifted to the characteristic
pattern of the Curuá River. Caxí was established in re- 184
cent times by conservative Munduruká who became dis- 361
satisfied with their new way of life on the Curuá River
and wished to revert to more traditional practice. How-

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14: Pribel--1 E-5 (1957) 1959 SQc3 Munduruku SQ13

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The Agriculture of the Munduruki Indians *

*Most of the data that follow were gathered in 1957, in the course of a two-month stay among the Indians of the Franciscan mission of Cururú and vicinity. My principal informants were the Munduruki Tomé, Cirilo, and Ambrósio. But I am also indebted to the mission fathers for much valuable data, for which I am grateful.

Protásio Pribel

Goeldi Museum

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I. Present-day knowledge of Munduruki agriculture
II. Garden methods
III. Social factors
IV. Native terminology

I. Present-day knowledge of Munduruki agriculture

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What we know of Munduruki agriculture is little, and most of it is based on the reports of nineteenth-century travelers. Already in [illegible] days the Munduruki were credited as a people who possessed a certain level of primitive agriculture. These /travelers/ speak of the Munduruki as living on the margins of the Tapajós River and as already being in the first stage of acculturation to the environment of the time. They deal with the subject of "agriculture" as if it were an ancient culture trait among these Indians. This may indeed be the truth, for we cannot assert the contrary. /2/ Although certain

[131]

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2. Reimes- 4724,D-5 (1884, 1887-1888) 1894 SPT Bakairi 377
Arinos 392
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Mundurucu 393

/301 cont./

enemies of the Bakairí, but there is no more specific information about them. The Nambiquara and Tapanhuna, enemies of the Apiaká, lived in the Arinos region; of the Tapanhuna, Joaquim Ferreira Moutinho* states that they spoke the Bakairí

* Noticia da Provincia de Matto Grosso, S. Paulo, 1869, p. 216.

language; unfortunately no notes were ever made on the language of the Bakairí, let alone on that of the Tapanhuna, /302/ and unfortunately the author has no claim to any credibility in these matters, as we shall see among the Bororó.

A statement in the fortieth volume of the Revista Trimensal do Instituto Historico (Rio de Janeiro, 1877, II, p. 97) is worth mentioning: it refers to the tribe of the Mundurukú /Mundurucu/, once feared far and wide, which today sits along the middle and lower Tapajos, but formerly lived farther upstream. Antonio Manoel Gonçalves Tocantins, who visited them in 1875, remarks: "In former times they also overcame the Bakairí, whom they call Murcichóbos and whom they forced to go into the Xingrunes where they ('abitelari') settled in villages." The latter addition shows that this can only refer to events of relatively recent times, in the Brazilian era. Nor should one believe, on the basis of this passage, that the Bakairí lived in the province of Pará; among the dwellers along the lower Tapajos, the region of the upper course and of the source arms Juruena and Arinos is called "Xingrunes"; the Mundurukú themselves lived next to the Apiaká in the province of Matto Grosso, where they are called Xarumá, and harassed all the tribes of the Arinos and Sobrinho area with [illegible] remembered them vividly, but said that their attacks no longer occur, since they have moved to the north.

The chief enemies of the West Bakairí, and probably even of the united Bakairí, if the tradition is correct, were the Kayabí. "Unvanquished savages in the vicinity of the salto," says the report of the Directoria dos Indios. The following is what I was